

7/12/19

~55?

CROSS WIRES



SOOT show!

WTF is this?



80s music reviews

and MUCH MORE!

**Hello, would you like to talk about
WORK?**

Work, work, work...

SOOT @ DUMB DUMB 8/11/19



Illustration 1: Helena - Pic by Marek

SOOT had a show at a house turned into an art venue which has bands play sometimes. You walk under the house, which is all pink and done up properly with pink safety tape, special lamps, and signs designating smoking areas and such. There is a table which has a postcard and a written leaflet/artist statement for the event.

Inside there were all kinds of pottery and some art in the SOOT style. The night was also a zine launch for SOOT ZINE IV, with my latest zine hidden inside it. The effect of all this was that SOOT really seem like an art collective and aesthetic rather than just a band.

Riley said that her and Tia had crossed paths a couple of times before properly knowing each other and then Tia has a feeling that Riley would be at this pottery class. She was, and they didn't really talk the whole time, so it was like a silent intuition that pulled them together. The secret otherworld they mention in their statement was moving through them.

"T H ' abject reality of th' pots only a relic of our time spent inhabiting th' meshes b'tween', they write. The pottery itself is a bit in-between –

all but one pot shows the marks of a pottery class with a wheel and learned technique. For instance there is a vase that seems that it would not want to hold more than one flower, and plates that are much too interesting to want to have food on them. There are mugs that are so conventionally misshapen that it is a delight to learn the fact that they actually hold water, like an argument in an abstruse philosophy/culture theory text that ~~seems like~~ is stoned babble but clicks in your mind. Like, shit, people just made this up? It's that easy? And it holds water? Maybe a whole SOOT dinner set is on the cards for next time. Pure revolutionary merging of art and everyday life.

There is part of me that thinks, "This is so childlike, anyone could do this." It doesn't seem to want to deal with the harsh, cold, disciplined reality like I want to. It wants to start from the beginning and build it's own thing, rather than grow into a clear, conventionally adult voice.

But I had an epiphany, while looking at all the pottery, that the irony of that 'adult' judgement is so big, because this is a massive feat of business common sense and real, material and social power, from which I am benefiting from as an adjunct writer participant and a... a customer. And a friend, of course (p.s. I O U for that mug).

The show raises money for the 7", so you know what you're getting back. Thereby a lot of the separation of interests implied by capitalism is defeated.

The childlike, who get things done in a spirit of friendship, nonjudgment and self-defined practical and imaginative goals are the winners here.

Also, the set was good. Helena, the new guitarist, has settled into the songs very well. The family there would've been proud.

‘MOST’ ‘WORK’ IS SIN

A blend of Michael McClelland’s guides to work (featured in SOOT zine IV), and reading the gospels lately, inspires some great epiphanies. I’m sorry to Michael if this is a bit triggering given your evangelical upbringing. Leftism and Christianity are strange but befitting bedfellows, to put it in as weird and gross sounding way as possible.

I’m trying to have a bit of fun writing this. This is because I don’t want it to be like ‘work’. ‘Work’ which I would call plain folly.

There is too much clutter in my head. I have to be careful that I don’t damage my own brain, lest I be a hypocrite with what I’m going to explain. I was writing a different article before but started a fresh new page as a form of self-care (all the rage to mention now, as though looking after yourself had been wiped out of common sense for some time beforehand).

Michael wrote about Bullshit Jobs by David Graeber. Now this is another article about other articles and books. I haven’t read the book. In the bible it says that people are always writing books and that too many books will make you tired (end of Ecclesiastes). I think it to be true.

But the book sounds to be right. Michael seems about right. There is a lot of bullshit-laden jobs.

I really want to bash out articles that are good like those some days where I feel energetic and MENTALLY HEALTHY™ but my own mind can be a bit of a tyrant or a yammerer. I don’t know if people can necessarily see it’s a bullshit job but as far as myself goes, I’m spending love points. I might not be altogether there for myself or for genuine relationships. This is a sin.

What other bullshit can I talk about?

I’m tired. That’s no bullshit.

You should stop binge drinking, Michael. Baudelairean binge drinking or otherwise (whatever that means). It says in the bible that people will lose sensitivity and be given over to, things like binge drinking.

I love to rile people up with the bible because I’m a Christian punk. Flip yeah! You can forgive me because of how embarrassing this is.

Michael wrote also, “... we too have repressed our own discursive inheritance...”

So let’s get back to the Word of God! *Who’s excited for the Word?* Come on kiddos you have nowhere else to be tonight.

I could be getting drunk. Not the time or place, though. Just to mention to not sound so hypocritical (I was on the line between wanting to drink beer and feeling already drunk enough on ideas).

Back to the Word. The Word is a very dangerous book which can lead to hell if it is not, um, for lack of a better word, cherry-picked correctly?

Correctly? What makes me able to pick out the right stuff? Do I have a bloody leftist *agenda*? What make me able to speak about work as well? Do I have a bloody *Christian* agenda? Agenda... Nasty word.

Also, what if I’m just saying things that are just stupidly obvious? Just, nobody says them?

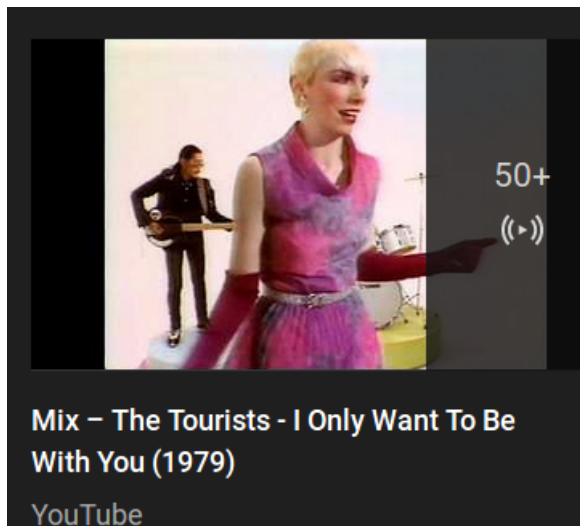
Love others as you love yourself, and if you don’t love yourself, by going and doing shitty, pointless work, then you’re not going to be able to love others properly. You can’t serve God (love) and money. Btw not gonna argue here if God exists or not, it’s subjective. (Not gonna argue if *I* exist, either, that’s subjective too).

Also, thank you, Michael, for your seemingly tireless writing and hilarity. Check out his bands Bloody Hell and Centre Negative, and his tattoo of his old boss’s email.

Also, a lot of Christianity is pretty sickening. I fully validate the experience of anyone who had the headfuck of authoritarian religion growing up. Oh and plus those persecuted by ‘left’ govt.

Eughh preaching is hard, call me out (kindly) if I’m a hypocrite.

A BREAK FOR SOME EMOTIONAL-PORN Adam Ant (1982), neither. Too shallow. Everyone's a damn 'rebel' nowadays.



My home workspace has been blasted with Charlii XCX through laptop speakers, which is a toxic element, so I have mimicked a more romantic 1980s by playing a youtube mix of videos related to *The Tourists – I Only Want To Be With You* (1979).

The 80s hits mimic romance enough to make your job feel romantic. You know when you have a shitty workday radio station on and Bon Jovi comes on? It alleviates the pain in your soul a bit. The mechanical and the meaningful are merged. You're working together.

The next song is *Tired Of Toein' The Line* by Rocky Burnette (1980). Followed by *Don't You (Forget About Me)* by Simple Minds (1985) You're working a bit now but we haven't forgotten about love or freedom yet! Don't you worry!

Another one's *I Got You* by Split Enz (1980). He's a bit doubtful about the love thing because the 20th century love wasn't perfect. "I don't know why sometimes I get frightened. You can see my eyes, and tell that I'm not lying." Maybe there's not perfect domestic love but it's still a great song and there's still *truth* to be found by looking into somebody's eyes.

Are Friend's Electric? By Gary Numan/Tubeway Army (1979), I don't really want to *work* to. Ttoo damn real in this age. Goody Two-Shoes by

I Think We're Alone Now by Tiffany (1987, original by Richie Cordell in 1967). This is one of the ultimates in 80s emotional porn. There's even a doco about mega-fans who seem like their only passtime is obsessing over her, a complete stranger, years after the one time hit cover song. Tiffany is love to them. "*Let me feel your heart beat, let me feel your heart beat.*" Who's interested in your heart beat? It's like being a mega porn addict but simulating something that you'd think you should at least get in real life. A dream more than a lecherous fantasy. But somehow creepier.

In A Big Country by Big Country (1983) inspired me to backtrack the list and write this article. Beautiful Scottish sound. It's a good working song. "In a big country, dreams stay with you, like a lovers voice fires the mountainside. Stay alive..." Are we still stayin' alive? I thought we were working for something bigger. Not necessarily the nation-state country per-se, just a big place. "Pull your head up off the floor, come up screaming. Cry out for everything you ever might have wanted..." Everything's still wide open. The boys ride mopeds across the Scottish countryside. I don't know if the conditions faced by my urban Brisbane audience will ever make for a wide-open feeling and faith that your cries are worth it, but I'm coming to terms with evil and banality being everywhere. Perhaps only a few will be saved. You still have to try.

Blue Monday by New Order (1983 Top Of The Pops). Oh dear, I'm getting tired. I remember Mark Fisher calling Joy Division a band of lads, repressed by the harsh school-work-marriage-children-in-a-dreary-flat trajectory. This is just so damn bleak. It's a good song. I mean how can you ignore your old vocalist committing suicide? Pretend it's all happy? If I'm going to work to hear yet more dreary songs, though, I'm going to question my existence a bit more. This is a song that would be good if I were doing something straight-forwardly useful in particular. Or maybe not? I don't know what I'm talking about anymore. I'm maybe a bit autistic, so straight-forwardly useful things are pleasurably and, well, emotionally neutral. No love required. I'm

starting to ramble a bit here. Doof, smack, doof, smack... Mindless, obedient repetition...



Illustration 2: "Work makes free"?

Is this enough yet? I can go on listening to these songs for ages. There's a reason they're classics.

Shiny Happy People by R.E.M. (1991). Oh, no. Happy-sad music. Again, a good song. Just makes me feel ambiguous, is all. Like I'm doing that stupid dance in the video, like that's my 'work'. That's all our work, to be fake-happy. These artists saw this post-cold-war, drug-bolstered, kiddy-music-soundtracked, pseudo-sensitive, affective labour increase, ouchhh, that's not fun to write about.

Happy House by Siouxsie and the Banshees (1980). Another one with a similar theme, but not as sucked in yet. Youtube, this playlist has gotten sadder. Siouxsie is bouncing around like that R.E.M. video but has the punk eye-rolls, the raised chin, the cold critique. The happy house is a sham and separates people. Siouxsie is looking through the window as an onlooker rather than a participant in whatever it is.

Adam and the Ants again, *Stand and Deliver!* (1981) The shallow tribalism of music and fashion. "I spend my cash on looking flash and grabbing your attention." Do you think I want to think about *money* right now? Imagine if you just had to listen to other people talking about shopping while you're at work. I know you're probably sick of the anti-consumerist critique but it's still basically true.

I'm getting tired now, I could feel guilty about tired, or guilty about writing while tired. I thought, in my addictive mind, that maybe I needed a cup of tea. Went to the kitchen and realised I'm hungry.

This is the No 1 Song In Heaven by Sparks (1979). Very clever middle class ironic boys. You can just plain make shit up in a pop song to puff yourself up and indicate that you understand the arbitrariness of worldly authorities. When I got into Sparks, that was a turn for being an overconfident uni twit. Which meant a fall. Sparks have never been the same for me.

Major Tom (Coming Home) by Peter Schilling (1983). One of the best songs. It's like you're lying in bed looking at the stars as a little kid and had a story read to you. Good work music.

And We Danced by The Hooters (1985). You might even have a little dance to this at work. Still a 'liar in love', whatever that means. Get off work like kids playing catch-and-kiss after school. 20th Century workers with their nice little town halls and pubs not filled with pokies and New Age Health and Welfare Expos. Still dancing like the waves of the ocean, not like sex doll robots too. But still a bit cheap.

Deviating from the playlist a bit now. *Melissa Etheridge – Bring Me Some Water* (1988). The poor woman's burning in hell right now because her lover's with another woman. She's after the water of life. Tough song but really sad underneath. Not good work song.

Steve Earle – Copperhead Road (1988). Something something moonshine durdur dur grandad... plantng things... durdurdur Copperhead Road durdurdur Vietnam. This is a good work song but not the best because my mind is trailing off. What's he talking about? I still dunno what Copperhead Road is really about. But it's good there's a bit of mystery, and a bit of history. That makes you feel like a good worker.

Pour Some Sugar On Me – Def Leppard (1987). Work, work, sugar, sugar. Sugar, oh honey, honey. You are my candy girl. I'd be totally fine with just listening to sweet, superficial music,

having a sweet, superficial life (so long as it was safe to be superficial, you know). It just was not to be. Not for these arms and legs. Nobody dances, nobody has a real job. Oh well.

LAST ONE. *Talk Talk – It's My Life* (1984). This is the salvation song, perhaps? "It's my life, it never ends." "...Sometimes played upon, afraid to lose." Video of wild animals, animals in a zoo, hopeful/mischievous looking boy with his mouth crossed out sometimes with wiggly lines. And also sperm looking lines running with the ostriches.



Illustration 3: It's like he's actually interested in the continuation of life

Most old pop songs imply a unity of romantic love, life and work with a clarity that's been hard to comprehend for me. Might write about that later.

ALRIGHT I'M DONE (FOR A SEC)

The devil voice in me says this zine is just some neoliberal self-directed-work initiative, right-wing proof that unemployment is fine, that anyone needs to just pull themselves up by the bootstraps, if they hate their work. Says I'm just another shitty superficial, networking, blabbering, selfishly individualist, pseudo-intellectual, self-promoting, brand managing, PC, unnecessarily medicated, competitive whatever else. That I should shut up, force myself to conform. Bootstraps going every which way.

Except I'm not that. Not now. There's a difference between taking the narrow path, that is the way to life, and endorsing neoliberal social

atomisation. Not that this whole zine thing is a perfect, sociable pursuit...

'MOST' 'WORK' IS SIN (RAMBLING PART 2)



Illustration 4: Chick tract excerpt, slightly modified

DISCLAIMER: Title is click-bait, I don't think I sin less because I'm unemployed

We live in difficult times. It's hard not to sin, but you still call it sin even if you have the excuse that people are making you do it.

Even if it looks like there's no alternative. It takes a fair bit of muscle, mentally, to get out of a social situation where everyone is just mired in shit.

I have the liberty to sit on the dole and write whatever I like. I still have some of that adolescent resistance to the structure of adult life in me. It's healthy to be a bit insane sometimes, I think. But it's not good if your mind remains scattered.

The problem with capitalism (and state communism) is that everybody's hiding from everybody. How can you change society when everyone's in these separate places all the time? Are you able to skip from place to place, web page to page, group to group, and have the grace and composure to not be threatened by the

contradictions? And not just numb out from it all?

Unions, churches, parties, activist groups, charities and businesses (including the internet?!) are a great triumph against human misery and chaos. People work against the grain (of misery) doing things every day so that you can eat and write your little 'zines. For there to be great misery and degradation of human life, and for someone to channel that misery into something that brings hope, material security and dignity, is a humbling thought.

Unions, churches, parties, charities, activist groups, internets and businesses are still capitalist (even the lefty ones). They are both founded on the suboptimal social, emotional and creative development of ~~the working (or unemployed)~~ all classes without the freedom to develop their full potential as individuals. Often you see lame music, lame aggression, overreactions to incremental changes, lazy deference to authority and a nice wrapping in slick graphic design to allude to the new tech creative elite. Scary, scary hierarchies, 'isms of all kinds, complacency, exploitation.

I don't think that the whole world's going to change. You just have to be what you wish other people would be, I guess.

You have to get to know people. And know how to know people. And then roughly know how to know groups of them. Or something like that. Know who you can talk to as an equal, who aren't going to get offended easily, who are open-minded like you. Will share the burden/excitement of getting to know other people and ideas sometimes, not just the shelter of group habit.

Incremental changes are what is realistic here, for a real human. Can't just sticky tape a revolutionary human together. It's more like blu-tack. Or clay. I heard an interesting sermon on clay. Humans are like clay, and they can break and be stuck back together in a special Japanese art form with gold where the cracks are. God (i.e. life, love, earnest counsel?) is the potter, you are the clay.

REVOLUTIONARY ARCHITECTURE



Illustration 5: "The beauty is in the street." May '68 revolution slogan. Something to do with the Situationist International. Brick throwing not always advised.

Alright, I get this isn't a priority for people who just need a house and have no money, I just wanted to dream and speculate a bit.

A revolutionary architecture and town planning that gives people the most security and freedom is needed. Current architecture and town planning gives privacy to families, couples, and all sorts of debauched domestic arrangements, but not to individual people.

To uphold true morality and true individual freedom, we need to be able to do what we want and live in peace. "Integrity is the privacy of the soul," said Molly Nillson. It's the privacy of the soul and the integrity of the body that architecture and spaces should be designed for.

It should not be compulsory to be domestic. You can be a private animal-like human swinging from trees and installations without compulsion to bare your soul and negotiate, except when your personal space becomes compromised, or you understand that there is work to be done to maintain the integrity of the space you live in. What you do with your body is your own business, within the reasonable standards of equals surrounding you.

There is no law in any religion or culture, that I am aware of, that says you have to live in a house with your kids and a partner. There is none that says you have to even have a family. Let alone sharehouses, aged care facilities, childcare centres, family cars and so on. Caring for widows and orphans (or the fatherless) is a requirement in Christianity, but maintaining an exclusive residence for your partner and family is not.

The household is the site of all kinds of concealed sins (greed, sloth, domestic violence and sexual abuse). The material goals of the past, of the house and the car, are not something to be romanticised too much. The true romance and morals of the past are more likely to be realised in spaces that are designed better. Otherwise we'll keep wasting our time on silly things.

I don't necessarily endorse waste and destruction of heritage, though. Like, we can keep the old buildings in case they new ones end up being shit or some people want different. Also, it is possible to make a happy home based on old fashioned morals and good taste. It's likely that you're going to try, in some half-arsed fashion.

MORE ON WORK



Illustration 6: JW's building paradise

“Come to me, all you who are wearied, and I will give you rest.” That’s from Jesus (I misread that as, “Come at me” for a split second). Jesus also flipped tables in the temple, saying, “How dare you turn my father’s house into a marketplace!”

“If you don’t work, you don’t eat.” I think Apostle Paul said that? That’s in the context of a church (or emancipatory collective, as Zizek puts it), though, not this vast, multi-directional, partly automated economy.

“Don’t strike your hand together in a pledge.” Says Proverbs. Also, “Don’t put up security for somebody else”. “Let your yes be yes, and your no be no.” “Do not lie.” These are all good grounds for rejecting current employment conventions.

“Pray for authority,” and, “Serve your masters as you would God.” “All are equal in Christ.” Keep in mind that Apostle Paul was writing from prison just for *speaking*. So what the interest here was, wasn’t an endorsement of slavery but of grace. Tact, tactics, tact, tactics. There’s a right time for everything. If he had said, “Alright, everyone leave where you are immediately, be agitated in Christ Jesus” think of the violence, antagonism, and overall logistical nightmare. Another forgotten revolt by a dishonoured people. So he says, “Stay where you were when you were called.” Called into the broader movement of freedom encompassing all classes, genders and races that choose to repent. Being

tough, with the support of real friends, until the material can be restructured to reflect the social relations.

This change doesn't happen because nobody seems to be able to preach the bible like it says. Is there going to be a right way, and a right time to do it?

INSECURE SEGUE

I'm writing half for the left, half for the Christians, for the in-betweens. Guess I dunno where I fit in.

Am I writing for the rich or the culturally influential somehow, too? People want to get rich or famous people on-side for their churches, their politics, whatever it is. It's bad, when thinking gets skewed and the message changed.

I was trying to finish this in time for going to see Erroll Parker and Clancy Overall from the Betoota Advocate tomorrow. Why? I guess because they have a scope of influence and they're in-between too. In between fiction and reality, criticism and acceptance, like, quasi-omniscient, but not too unapproachable. Guess I forestalled this because I was worried about what *they* would think. It's not my job to impress media people though.

Sends you a bit schizo, thinking about too much. Getting back to the basics. What *is* my job? Firstly there is my soul to attend to. Honestly I don't have time right now to try to do the healing work on my soul so I'm just gonna write really fast and then watch the new South Park and go to a vegetable gas/noise music show.

Ahh I mean I will preach the gospel in haste because I could be sowing seeds for your... your soul, for you to fix your own soul. Hmm, whose soul? The choir?

I shouldn't preach the bible in haste but this is better, I think, than standing in the street yelling with a sign and blasting the Soviet national anthem or something. Or using God to legitimise a dull political platform that you obviously superficially benefit from a lot more than others. Ahh no, now I just look like a divisive arsehole.

And a sycophant, for wanting to circulate amongst the influential. Please forgive me.

RICH CHRISTIANS O NO

Alright, so, there are so, so many Christians and people who owe their sentiments about equality to Christianity. But obviously the churches, and the workers, don't treat the rich like Jesus or the apostles.

A rich young man came up to Jesus and wanted to follow him. Jesus told him to obey the law, the ones about basically being a good person. He said he already did. But I guess the guy noticed something was still missing and he wasn't like the others, still. What now? So Jesus said, "If you want to be perfect, sell your possessions and give to the poor."

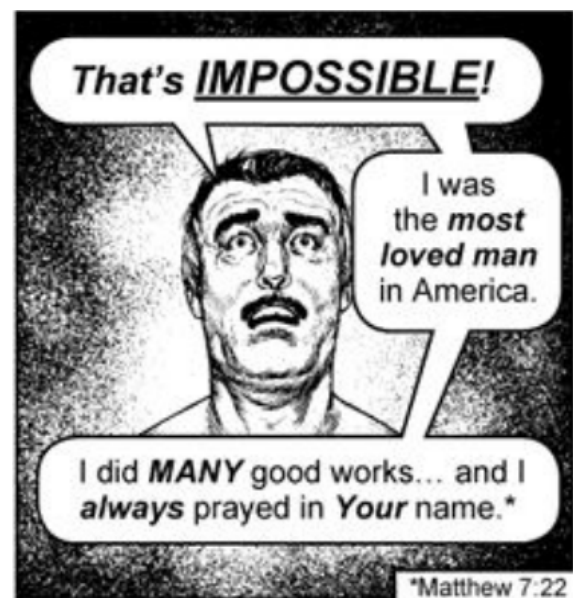


Illustration 7: Chick tract excerpt: "Your name is not written in the (face?)book of life"

Another story was a couple selling property and pretending to give all the money to the Apostles, but they could see right through it. The couple fell dead (probably had heart attacks). People would bring money to the apostles and it'd be divided to everybody as they had need.

I think that a great deal of this difficulty is shame. Everyone sins, falling short of a social ideal. People pretend everything is fine or they get all bitter. Right wing, left wing. Grow up, join an institution, try to forget everything. It's

like somebody has to tell you who you are and what to do, because we don't know who we are and what we need.

What is the working class? Who is honestly poor? And who/where is the rich? Socially/culturally, who the hell-heck is who-what-class nowadays, anyway? I could point out who is more or less bourgie, like it's a competition. There's also situations where the boss is your mate (though Michael did say, "Your Boss Is Not Your Friend" as point no1 in Covering Your Arse At Work). What do you do then? What do you do if you're a lefty bourgie uni student? A middle class kid picking mangoes overseas? Someone with a 'white collar' office job working minimum wage on seasonal contracts? Someone recruiting friends/flying monkeys/family for your small business/stall/whatever it is? Someone living off the unpaid domestic labour of your mum while you sit around posting on /pol / ? And so on. Oh yeah and think of the industrial workers overseas. God, the sweatshops, caring about them wasn't a phase.

Sure as fuck flip material inequality and skewed social relations exist, and are significant. Sure as hell heck there are cultural products/ideas that obfuscate and sustain this reality. Shouldn't panic, though. This is only about good and evil, "Not flesh and blood but the powers and principalities that govern this world." Looking under the surface. But also the plain facts of what people have and do with themselves.

Who would you trust with money, in these times? Who would you trust to work for, to spend the fruits of your labour in a proper way? What a burden, being a steward of wealth. Disorganised psyche, disorganised relationships, disorganised society. There's a strategy apart from throwing money at people, or taking things off people. When nobody knows what to do with anything.

The only place to start in this confusing world is back to basics. Social basics, truth, figuring out what you actually need in the flesh. Realism through emotional security, good faith, idealistic imagination.

If you really respected yourself, you would be able to find the right words to say with nothing being out of bounds for you. No shame around money or anything like that. No greed, no fear. Put up with being poor when you need to, knowing you've said everything you could. Offending some people in a spirit of perceptive love, like Jesus did.

In a way, it's a blessing that the social structure's falling apart. It's not obvious who your leaders are anymore. You have to use your mind more.

I could go for a beer right now. It might help me finish this. Would it be feeding my inner tyrant, though? "All things are permissible, but not all are beneficial."

What is work?

Your JOB is to actively try to be a good person, set yourself free, be a witness of your inner progress against all oppressors. Helping each other in that (within your limits). More important than drinking, distraction, being 'working class', being 'christian' etc. Everything is at your disposal, really, to interpret, put to good purpose – that's real fun.

I know I still might sound a little scattered and anguished but one thing is, I didn't drink last night, and felt just fine around people. Because I value my time.

INSPIRATION FROM STRANGE PLACES

Jehovah's Witnesses have a vision of after the end times where everyone consumes what they work for and nobody plants for somebody else to take away. i.e. not capitalist. You know, the colourful drawings with the happy families in gardens with piles of fruit and all that. Their particular way forward to that is to be neutral toward any political, national institution, and patiently teach the Kingdom of God. I am neutral to the JW organisation but they say some good things.

I'm so grateful for a JW friend of mine (from a certain band called Brick Brick) for putting to shame my bitter, smirky, paralysing feelings

about Christianity, with nothing but her grace and sincerity.

I thought I'd never read that little booklet they gave me, but what do you know? You can find ideas in the strangest of places, and strangest of people.

Even Jordan Peterson (just to annoy the lefties a little) said that, "If you can't tell somebody to go to hell, then you can't negotiate with them." If you can't express yourself at work, it can eat away at you, he said.

So what I'd do is, repent in how I've colluded in being a worse person because of conformity to capitalism. Forgive yourself. Also repent if I've been a worse person because of insecurities and collectivist inclinations.

Forgive me because my coping resources are disparate. I don't trust institutions much. So I'm talking to YOU. As an individual, whoever you may be.

Shout-out to Unite lefty activist hub and library too. Worth paying a visit.



Illustration 8: SOOT pottery, pic by Marek

THANKS FOR LISTENING XOX.

cwzine@protonmail.com

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